

For Official Release
PR 001-06072023
Office of the Governor
Utulei, American Samoa
June 07, 2023



American Samoa Participates in the National Governors Association Healthcare Western Regional Workshop



JACKSON, WY - The National Governors Association Healthcare Delivery and Postsecondary Education teams hosted a Healthcare Workforce Western Regional Workshop for several states and the territory of American Samoa on June 6-7. The workshop focused on Healthcare workforce recruiting and retention efforts, workforce development opportunities, licensure and regulation, health workforce data & planning, and interstate higher education priorities. Dr. Rowena Reid, the Human Resources Director at LBJ Hospital, Director Lele Ah Mu, the

American Samoa Community College (ASCC) Nursing Program Director, and Dr. Siniva Mann from the Office of the Governor represented American Samoa at the NGA Healthcare Western Regional Workshop.

The American Samoa team engaged in discussions with the states' participants facing similar challenges and barriers to recruiting and retaining the next generation of the healthcare workforce. Some of the top health workforce issue(s) in American Samoa shared in the discussions include the need to increase the interest in nursing and medical programs, retention efforts, financial resources to support students that are interested in the ASCC and Off-Island medical programs, establish partnerships to recruit for Samoans in the United States to return and work at the local healthcare organizations, expand the ASCC nursing program while ensuring compliance with national standards and improve training capacities. The American Samoa team also shared the importance of investing in local students and individuals that are interested in pursuing a healthcare career.

The collaboration from the sessions led to discussions of best practices that can be implemented to work through the challenges and barriers in recruiting and the retention of the American Samoa healthcare workforce. The best practices and recommendations include the early introduction of healthcare careers in K-12, outreach workshops to bring awareness about other roles in finance, HR, ancillary, and housekeeping within the healthcare industry, partnering with the American Samoa Department of Education to discuss scholarship opportunities for high school and college students that are interested in healthcare careers, healthcare professional development, and review the current contract terms for international employees. These efforts will promote investment in local students and anyone who expresses interest in the healthcare industry. Dr. Hanna Maxey, President and Founder of Veritas Health Solutions LLC supported these best practices by stating to "Grow our own, keep our own". The American Samoa team received references to healthcare grant opportunities to assist in education, training, and professional development.

The Healthcare workforce is essential for delivering quality patient care, promoting health, responding to emergencies, advancing medical knowledge, and sustaining healthcare systems. The American Samoa team understands the importance of partnering with the Department of Public Health, LBJ Hospital, ASCC, American Samoa Health Services Regulatory Board, the American Samoa Department of Education, the American Samoa Department of Human Resources, and the Office of the Governor to work through the challenges and barriers by taking action on the tasks discussed in the NGA healthcare session.

###









